Goa Coast is due to the non-availability of speed boats either with the Customs authorities or with the Coast Guard organisation and that the only speed boat with the Customs authorities is obsolete and often out of order and also that Coast Guard organisation procures the speed boats from Bombay after they get requisition from Customs authorities with advance 48 hours notice; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to provide speed boats to the Customs officials in order to effctively combat smuggling activities on the Goa Coast?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b) Two boats have been made available to the Goa Customs authorities. The two Customs Patrol crafts available with Pune Collectorate also cover the Goa coastline. In addition, the Coast Guard keep a vessel ready at Bombay for sail at half-an-hour notice from the Customs /Directorate of Revenue Intelligence. The additional requirements of boats for the Goa Customs for anti-smuggling operations on the Goa Coast is being examined.

SAIL Depot in Goa

2101. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the great demand from the trading community in Goa for the establishment of a SAIL depot in Goa as at present they have to lift their quota from Belgaum and the Goa Handicraft Development Corporation can cater upto 3300 tonnes against the present demand of 5000 tonnes; and

(b) if so, whether Government will consider the opening of a depot in Goa, in the interest of the trading community of this new State?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. SAIL intends to continue the existing arrangement of making supplies in the State of Goa through their consignment agency in Goa.

2102. [*Transferred to the 26th March*, 1990]

2103. [*Transferred to the 25th March*, 1990]

Trade with Afghanistan

2104. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

SHRI JAGADISH JANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are working out a plan in order to expand the volume of trade with Afghanistan; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The possibility of promoting economic and commercial cooperation is being explored. The focus is on increasing exports and imports of existing items as well as identifying new products that can be traded between India and Afghanistan. Industrial cooperation is also being considered to enhance levels of trade.

Increase in availability of steel

2105. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to increase availability of steel in the